

SEPTEMBER 2008

Facets

for women

School jitters

getting your child ready
to go back to school

Create your own
**summer
SALSA**

The language
barrier
between men
and women:

**fact or
fiction?**

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Sunlight streams into Pat's kitchen window, brightening her dining area with its warm rays. The entire space is uniquely open and inviting for a 1950's home but it wasn't always that way. "When I bought the house in 2006 I knew there were a few things I would like to do to it," Pat explained. Chief among them, was the removal of the cabinets that divided her kitchen and dining room. Pat gave Ames Contracting Team a call and they quickly brought the dreams she had for her home to life.

"They did a wonderful job of coordinating everything," she recalled. "They communicated well and they showed a lot of respect for my home." Like many homeowners, Pat was concerned about maintaining the integrity of her home and creating a space that felt original to the house despite its modern touches. She also wanted to make responsible choices that minimized waste and praises the ACT carpenter for helping her to accomplish that. "They did a wonderful job helping me keep cabinets and make necessary changes," she explained. "I was happy to conserve materials. It made the new work blend seamlessly with the old."

Among Pat's favorite features is her new backsplash. "I took (samples of) my wallpaper and countertops to Ames Flooring Gallery and Barb Vincent helped me pick out a back splash in off-white and dark blue. I am very happy with it." Vincent also helped Pat select new flooring.

New appliances and some unique under cabinet lighting completed the update. "Everything is new except the cabinets," said Pat. "Keeping my cabinets makes it have a warm and comfortable look and everything looks like it has always been there."

Today, Pat can work in her kitchen while watching her grandchildren play in the dining area. She can chat with guests as she cooks. She can bask in the sunshine while enjoying a cup of coffee at her table. "It is exactly what I had envisioned, exactly what I wanted," she said.



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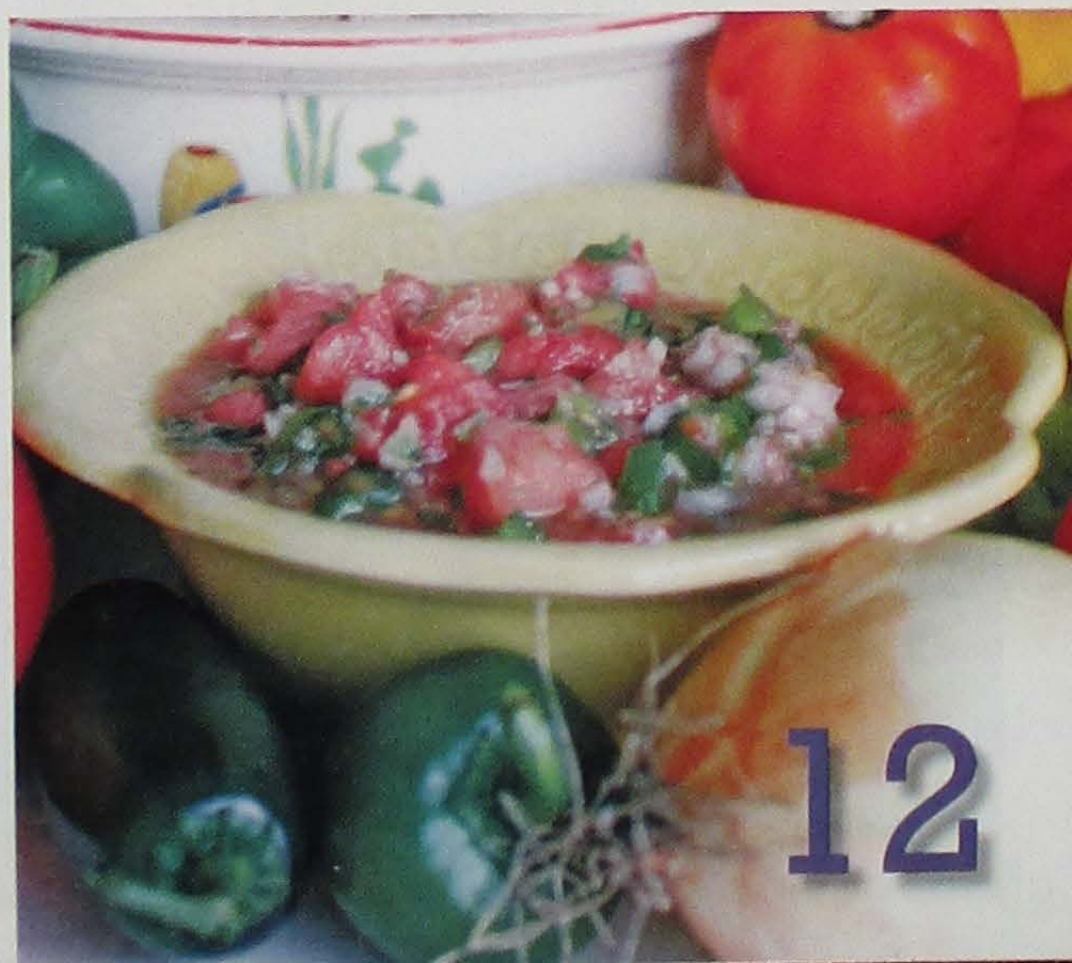
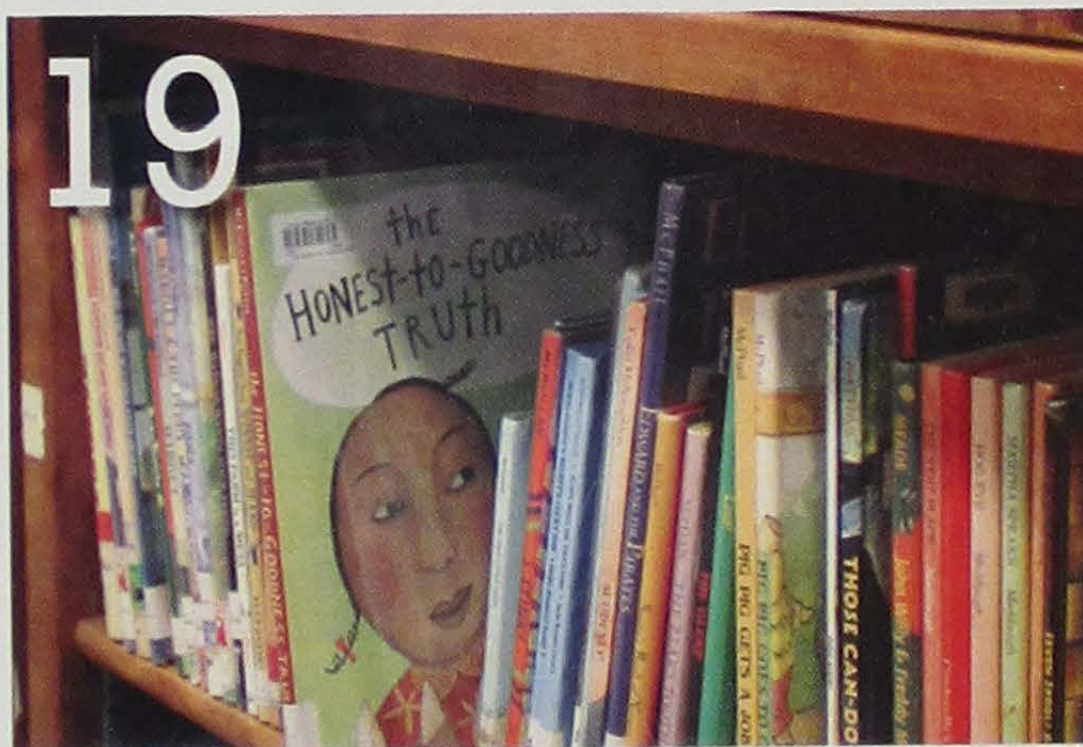
WELCOME TO Facets

Facet - 1. One of the flat surfaces cut on a gemstone.
2. The particular angle from which something is considered.

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A review of "Wicked Lovely"

By MARISA MYHRE

With summer coming to a close and school close upon us I wanted to give parents a recommendation for their teen or even for themselves to enjoy. Call it my last summer read recommendation or a good way to get your teen reading for school, but this is a book I really enjoyed and wanted to put out there.

I picked up "Wicked Lovely" by Melissa Marr mostly for the cover. I wanted to read it for pure pleasure. It helped that one of my all-time favorite teen authors recommended it on the cover.

It is a sort of sci-fi adventure involving fairies. The main character is a normal human who can see fairies. These fairies are not cute little winged creatures. They are mean spirited and sometimes cruel creatures (she finds out later that there are different sorts of fairies, some naturally more mean spirited than others).

She spends her life pretending not see them, terrified of what would happen if they knew she could see them.

Then she is approached by the Summer King — the head of the fairies. She needs to be his queen in order to save her world and his.

It sounds contrite and blasé but I assure

you Marr does this in a way that hasn't been done before.

She has a boyfriend and a life she doesn't want to leave to become what he needs. She doesn't want to leave school or her grandmother. The king himself has a woman he is very close to who cannot be the summer queen. It is a tangled mess that is worthy of Shakespeare.

I usually see where a story is going a million miles away. This one kept me guessing. I couldn't see how Marr could possibly wrap this up in a way that would make anyone in the story happy.

But the way she manages to do it is what makes this a great read for teenagers.

It's all about compromise. Nothing is black and white. None of the fairies are all good or all bad. Just because these old rules say it has to be this way doesn't mean it does. There is always a way. A compromise. Something that fulfills the obligation but still leaves room enough for the characters to get what they want too.

This book sends out a fantastic message for teens.

It has an almost subliminal message against peer pressure. Just because everyone says it has to be this way doesn't

mean it does. The characters in the book (at least the human ones) don't simply accept their fate. They sit and think about it. They talk it out. They find a way around the restrictions being put on them.

It's hard to believe all of this is in a little teen romance about fairies. But Marr gets a lot of mileage out of a low page count.

One warning to parents: there are sexual issues in here. Nothing is glaringly obvious. This isn't an erotic book with a heavy sex scene but there is some kissing and discussion. I always encourage parents to read the book first and decide for themselves what is and is not appropriate for their child. Plus you get to enjoy a great read in the bargain.

There is a sequel of sorts to this book. "Wicked Lovely" is a stand alone and the story is complete but "Ink Exchange" has the same characters making appearances. The main characters are different but connected to the characters in "Wicked Lovely."

I didn't enjoy this book as much but it is more of the same. It has very much the same sort of setup and has the same lessons in it.

So if you're looking for a good read for your teenager or a fun story to test drive yourself, this is the book to pick up.

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- Went back to school for Masters Degree, taught Special Education
- Went back to school to become a School Psychologist
- Became Director of Special Education in Park Ridge, IL

Philosophy:

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Zee continues to teach and share her passion for textiles & fashion to her grandchildren in her townhome sewing studio.



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[LETTER TO THE EDITOR]

Learning to

Dance

By LESLEY LYNN EISCHEN

Our oldest son, Ethan, had a field trip and I went along with him. We had lunch in the skywalk of downtown Des Moines. After finishing our lunch we were given the opportunity to check out some of the stores. I bought a decorative plate and written on it, it says, "Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass. It's about learning to dance in the rain." Ten days later we learned my husband, Mike, had kidney cancer. He is 36 years old.

I remember when we got the results. The doctor didn't come out and say the dreaded "C" word. So me ... being me ... asked, "Is it cancer?" The doctor looked at me, rubbed his hand across his mouth and said, "Well ... nothing is one hundred percent until we get in there and get the pathology back ... but yes, it is most likely cancer."

There it was. I couldn't tell you what he said after that. The lump in my throat made it impossible to swallow. The walk from the doctor's office to the parking lot seemed endless. When we stepped outside the air swept my face and I gulped down the lump in my throat realizing I had been holding my breath. A million thoughts rattled through my mind. I couldn't breathe again. I looked at Mike whose face shined with the same tears that were suffocating me.

We had to tell our boys. We had to tell Mike's parents. I'm a mom. How do you tell a mother that her child has cancer? No ... he's not a baby any longer to the world ... but to his mother ... he will always be her baby.

We arrived in his parent's driveway and I was certain I was going to vomit. You could almost hear the crack of his parent's hearts breaking ... when the words came out. When I thought I couldn't cry anymore ... our boys got home from school. Now I was the mother. That night I found myself somewhere I hadn't been since I was a young girl ... knelt beside my bed, hands clasped, head bowed ... praying to God ... begging God ... to have mercy. I couldn't breathe again.

Over the next several days in between doctors appointments and testing I would find myself there again on my knees. In front of the washing machine. On the rug in the bathroom. At the kitchen sink. Asking God for

comfort for our family. Asking Him for strength and grace. Pleading with God to stay near to us. Reminding Him I wasn't ready to miss Mike.

The day of Mike's surgery I had family and friends with me in the waiting room. As we were sitting there a woman came to us and said she was looking for Lesley. My first thought was that she was going to give us a report on Mike. I told her that I was Lesley. She said her name was Sheri. Then the pieces started coming together. She is the friend of a dear family that I provide daycare for.

Sheri's husband has kidney cancer and she was there at the hospital with him while

the rest of my life that God wanted me to know in that very moment that I was not alone. Can you see this? He sent a perfect stranger suffering through her own tremendous pain to show me that the greatest of these is Love. I knew, profoundly knew, in that moment that God loves me. I don't deserve it ... I couldn't earn it ... and I am certainly not worthy, but He loves me.

Mike made it through surgery. The usual two-hour surgery to remove the kidney and surrounding area ended up being three or so hours long. They had to bring in a third surgeon, a vascular surgeon, to scrape millimeter by millimeter of the tumor that

“Although we may stumble ... be out of rhythm ... and occasionally even step on one another's feet when the storms come ... we will choose to learn to dance.”

he was receiving treatments. However, we had never met until this moment. We talked for a few minutes and then she reached for her arm. This perfect stranger removed a bracelet from her wrist and said, "This was given to me and I want to pass it on to you." I look down at the silver bracelet in my hand and read the inscription ... 1 Corinthians 13:13 ... And now these three remain: Faith, Hope and Love ... But the greatest of these ... is love."

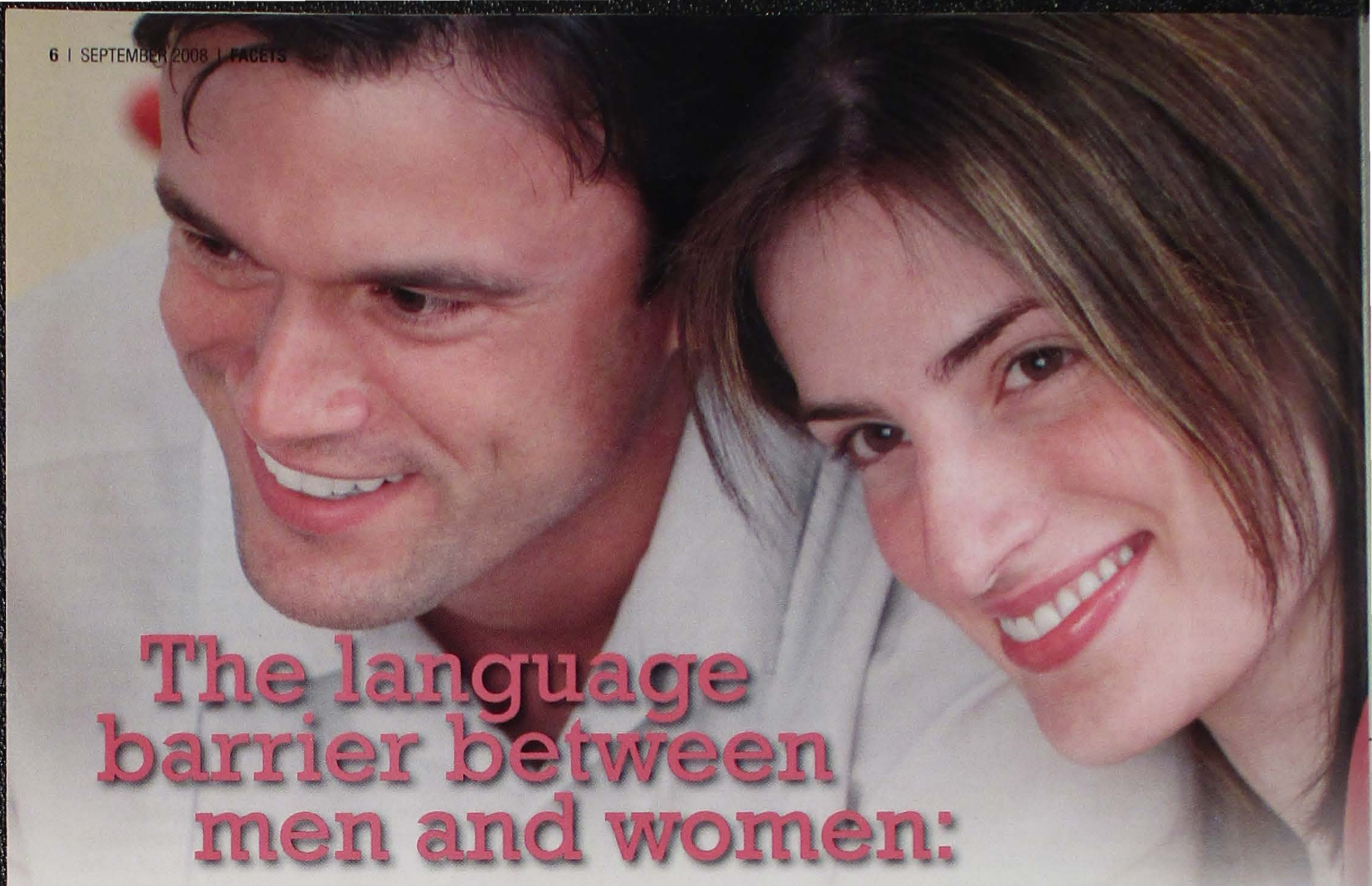
My vision was so blurred from tears I could barely see. I tried to thank her but the words wouldn't come out. Instead I just hugged her. When my eyes cleared and I looked up the first person I saw was my Mom ... with tears streaming down her face and then I saw Mike's parents ... and my friends ... were crying with me.

Usually it's me that will never allow anyone to cry alone. I, ah ... cry at Hallmark commercials. But you see, just as any loving Father would hope ... God wanted to bring me comfort. He sent Sheri. I will believe for

had grown around Mike's aorta. The got it all! Over the next four days Mike would recover at a phenomenal pace. By the second day he was sitting up and the day after that he was doing laps around the hospital's third floor. Mike had kept his promise. See, a couple days before going into surgery I asked Mike to make me only one promise. I asked him that no matter what happens that he never give up. His response ... "Do I have a choice?!" He said it as more of statement than an actual question. Not as long as there is air in my lungs" ... I said matter of factly.

During his hospital stay Mike would receive many visitors. We saw lots of friends and family. They were generous with their time and gifts, kind with their words and always offering to help in anyway necessary. Mike's Aunt and Uncle who we hadn't seen in literally years visited several times. One day as his Aunt was leaving Mike thanked her for praying for him. Mike was referring to his current situation. She told Mike that they had been praying for him since he was an infant.

continued on page 18



The language barrier between men and women:

Fact or fiction?

By MARY HALSTRUM
Facets Editor

Editor's Note: I'll start out by saying that I don't profess to possess the academic credentials to speak to the subject of whether or not men and women speak the same language, and that all I have is what I know and have experienced during my 39 years of life, including more than seven years of marriage. I didn't conduct any surveys. I didn't do any polling. I didn't perform any scientific studies. My conclusions are drawn from good, old-fashioned observation over the years growing up with two older brothers, a father, a stepfather and being married to a former military man turned carpenter. So whether or not you, the readers, will learn anything new from this column is debatable. But hopefully you'll enjoy it anyway.

Growing up as the youngest child with two older brothers, I always felt pretty special. After all, I was the baby girl, what's not to like? I was a tomboy growing up, jumping bikes and the like with my brothers and boy friends. I always felt more comfortable hanging out with rough and tumble boys rather than frilly little girls. My mother and father were both big sports fans, and luckily that trait was passed on to me. Sports have always been interesting to me as far back as I can remember. During my dating years, I usually knew more about football, baseball and basketball than the guys I dated. I figured that was a good thing. At least being a football widow wasn't a fate I'd experience in my future.

In college I was captain of a billiards team comprised of me and my four best guy friends, Chuck, Claudio, Chad and Nico. We hung out together all the time either practicing or playing in league competition. I really thought that I understood men. I hung out with them all the time. I had best friends who

were male. I figured finding a man who possessed good communication skills and spoke the same "language" as me would be a cinch. Boy was I wrong.

The problem is that men and women don't really speak the same language at all. The dynamic is different with guy friends. Even though I was invested in these relationships, they were different than girlfriend/boyfriend relationships in that there wasn't any physical attraction element involved. Grant it, some of my guy friends were good looking and they might have also thought that I was good looking, but we weren't physically attracted to each other.

The result of men and women not speaking the same language is communication problems in close, personal relationships. In fact, John Gray wrote a book about this very subject back in the '90s called "Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus." It was a best seller, and I'm not ashamed to admit I bought a copy. Since I'd always been more of a "guy's girl," I never thought I

would need to read a book to understand how to communicate with a man I was in a relationship with. But unfortunately, being a tomboy, possessing extensive sports knowledge and having really close friendships with several guys didn't translate into speaking the same language as men. After all, I was still a woman. Being a guy's girl didn't seem to give me any advantage at all, except during that relationship honeymoon period, but that's always the blissful time during most relationships anyway, so that didn't hold much weight.

Some recent studies have found that woman use an average of 20,000 words a day while men only use about 6,000. That's a huge difference. This little piece of information really opened my eyes to better understanding my husband. It's no wonder that when he comes home from work and I'm ready to talk his ear off, he would rather take a shower, sit down and relax. In the near future, when our daughters get a little older, he will be outnumbered in the words-per-day department, 60,000 to 6,000. Poor guy.

There have also been studies conducted that conclude women are more verbal and men are more visual.

So I think to myself, if this is true, "Why can't my husband see that the laundry basket is overflowing if he walks by it 10 times a day? Or why can't he see that I need help picking up after the kids if every time he walks through the house he has to navigate around toys on the floor that haven't found their way back to the toy box?" We've had the "housework discussion" more times than I can count, but nothing ever seems to sink in.

I truly believe men and women are different. Period. Whether it's due to nature or nurture, it doesn't really matter. It is what it is. My husband and I could read books, see a counselor, and learn to really "talk" and "listen" to each other, and it still might not make that much difference. To some extent, we each hear what we want to hear when the other person is talking. We've done the little experiment where the person listening has to repeat back to the one talking what he/she said. I can repeat almost verbatim back to him what he said, while he usually isn't as precise. So that means I'm the better listener, right? Maybe ... or maybe I just have a better short-term memory, and 10 minutes later I've already forgotten what he said. And I'll admit that when my

husband gets going about the state of the country, sometimes I just nod my head and say "Yep," while tuning out nearly the entire conversation. Does that make me insensitive to his need to have someone listen to him? To hear him? Perhaps. Or maybe it just means that I'm tired and depressed that I can't do anything other than what I'm already doing to help fix our country.

To be honest, communication between my husband and I is probably not the best. But words aren't always needed to communicate. We've known each other so long that we can literally tell what the other one is thinking based on the looks on our faces and body language, which is one of the best nonverbal forms of communication.

Maybe communication is overrated. I'm not saying that I would be happy if my husband and I never spoke to each other or had a meaningful conversation again. But I understand that we are just different genders, different people, and if I didn't know any better, I'd say different species. But I'm OK with that. Besides, my husband used all of his 6,000 words-per-day allotment at work. I guess I'll just have to wait for the weekend.

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Parents can no longer send a child to kindergarten expecting the school to be the exclusive provider of education. Parents are expected to actively be involved with their children's education in the home as well as at school. Parents must gauge their child's academic development in reading, comprehension, written language, math and study skills. To do this, parents must know what these skills are and how they manifest. I will explain these skills.

Reading is recognized as the ability to accurately and fluently lift words off a page. This happens when decoding skills have been systematically developed with phonics. Reading is a

wonderful experience that opens doors to stories, school subjects, information and "how-to" on any subject. It can also be a painful experience, especially when a poor reader is asked to read out loud. A reading problem exists if a child experiences difficulty "sounding out" words; reads slowly and painfully; hates to read; or is in "special reading" at school.

Everyone realizes comprehension is the ability to understand what is read. Comprehension is also the thinking skills that lead to understanding what is seen or experienced or heard. Comprehension skills include deductions, analogies, statement inference, basic evidence, following written directions, following verbal directions, recitation behavior, memorization and divergent reasoning. A comprehension problem exists if someone experiences difficulty following verbal or written directions; thinks they did well on a test or project only to discover they really had little understanding. "I don't get it," is something they say or think quite frequently. They intend to do better and

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try harder, but get the same results.

Well developed written language skills enable us to clearly convey our thoughts, feelings, data, and answers. Spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and syntax skills are critical to good writing. Application of these skills results in good sentence structure, well-formed paragraphs and excellent papers. Written language skills rest on the foundation of reading and comprehension. Essays, short answers, stories, poetry, and research have varying requirements. Each type of writing must be developed for a student to be successful. A written language problem exists if you have difficulty spelling; struggle grammar and syntax; experience difficulty organizing when you write; have messy papers; or find it difficult to read what you have written out loud.

Math skills include understanding of numbers, sets, the number line, math facts, measurement, time, money, data interpretation, story problems, algebra and geometry. This is a partial list of the various skills needed to be successful in math. After a student develops basic math skills, more complex skills are introduced. Good math scores on ACT require a student to have math success through Algebra II. Math development means the "calculator" called the brain learns how to do math, so the actual calculator is a tool, not a substitute brain. A math skills problem exists if you believe you just can't "do" math; you believe that a calculator is all you need to do math; you hate math, especially story problems; you use your fingers, or touch points, to do math.

Study skills include assignment completion, daily planner, note-taking, test-taking, self-grade monitoring, motivation and organizational skills. Students can struggle with any one, or combination, of these skills. A student who does well with class work can struggle with homework. Because study skills are so varied, any missing piece can be cause for problems. Motivation is a critical factor in good study skill development. Study skill development is indicated if you forget to fill in your planner for each class each day; you often realize you don't have everything

you need to do your homework; you forget to turn in your homework; you want to get better grades; you don't get enough return for time invested in studying; you often think you did better on a test/quiz than you actually did.

It is important to realize a problem exists. Parents can see academic problems in the papers their child brings home, reports from school, conferences and how the child enjoys school. The first step in solving any academic issue is to contact the school for a meeting. Be clear who you request be in attendance, set time and place, prepare an agenda of topic(s) you want to discuss and make the agenda available at the meeting. Make one goal clear: you expect your child to be at grade level, or above, performance as the result of actions taken by the school. During the meeting, stay on the agenda topic(s). If any other topic(s) need addressed, place them on the agenda for the next meeting. Take notes of who attends, their position, their input and agreed upon action. Be clear who will be responsible for what action, set a follow up meeting and the agenda for that meeting. It is especially important to take notes during your meeting. Sometimes taking a note-taker with you is the easiest. Following the meeting, send a thank you letter with notes on actionable items, who is responsible for the item, next meeting date, place, time and agenda. Send this to all who attended or were unable to attend. You have now set the stage to determine if the school is the correct resource for the problem.

Remember there are many resources for academic help. The school is a natural first choice, but not the only one. Grade level, or above, performance is the one goal for your child's success. Private clinics, home schooling, tutoring and medical resources are often part of the solution. If the goal is not clearly agreed to be grade level or above performance, don't settle. Insist your child thrive academically and you will see success.

Rebecca Anderson owns Learning Changes in Ames. For more information, call Anderson at (515) 233-4475.

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Acne 101

By DR. KATHY COOK

School time is about to begin and the first course is Acne 101. Thought you should have left acne back in your school days only to have continued problems or suddenly find yourself with acne when you didn't have it as a teen? Well, you are not alone. A significant number of adult women have acne problems. Factors that can contribute to acne include the following:

- changing hormones such as around your menstrual cycle, changing birth control, pregnancy or even menopause.
- some medications such as steroids, antiviral and anticonvulsants
- stress can lead to the production of more androgens which increase the chance of acne
- medical conditions such as polycystic ovary disease

Treatments have also changed since your school days. Medications that worked as a teen may not be effective now or irritating to your skin. Over the counter products containing benzyl peroxide or salicylic acid may treat mild acne well. If these are too harsh or not enough to control your acne, prescription therapy is available. Standard treatment with medications to target the various stages of acne include the following:

- retinoid (Retin-A is one) help unblock the pores to prevent worsening acne and let other acne medications penetrate better.
- topical antibiotics and benzyl peroxides (or combinations of both) that target the bacteria *p. acnes* that is central to developing inflammatory acne.
- other topical anti-inflammatory agents that also target the papular/pustular lesions.
- oral antibiotics may work in several ways including decreasing *p. acnes* bacteria and as an anti-inflammatory agent.
- oral hormones including birth control pills to target the hormone aspect of acne or

spironolactone which is an anti androgen type medication.

- chemical peels +/- microdermabrasion.
- isotretinoin which is a vitamin A derivative for severe cystic scarring acne.

Newer treatments or non standard treatments include:

- Light based therapies such as laser, broad band light or LED therapy will become more common as the need for additional treatments grows (due to concern about antibiotic resistance of bacteria) and availability increases. These may be FDA approved to treat acne but are not usually covered by insurance.
- Tanda is a hand held device that uses LED blue light to decrease inflammatory papules. It also comes with a red light that helps reverse the signs of aging. Two benefits in one device! There are multiple lasers that are approved for acne treatments some of which target the oil glands to decrease their size and number.
- Isolaz is a new treatment that utilizes broad band light and vacuum to

treat acne. I have the first machine in Iowa. Isolaz is a series of treatments, typically four done weekly to every other week, followed by maintenance once every 3 to 6 months. These are painless treatments that show improvement often within 24 hours of the first treatment. Nothing else works that fast! This is combined with standard therapies and maintenance treatments to continue control.

- Zeno which is a hand held device available over the counter that uses heat to help destroy *p. acnes* without damaging the overlying skin. This is effective for occasional acne papules or to supplement prescription treatment.

There are also other acne like conditions like perioral dermatitis and acne rosacea that occur. So, if your home care is not enough, see your dermatologist for correct diagnosis and prescription therapies.

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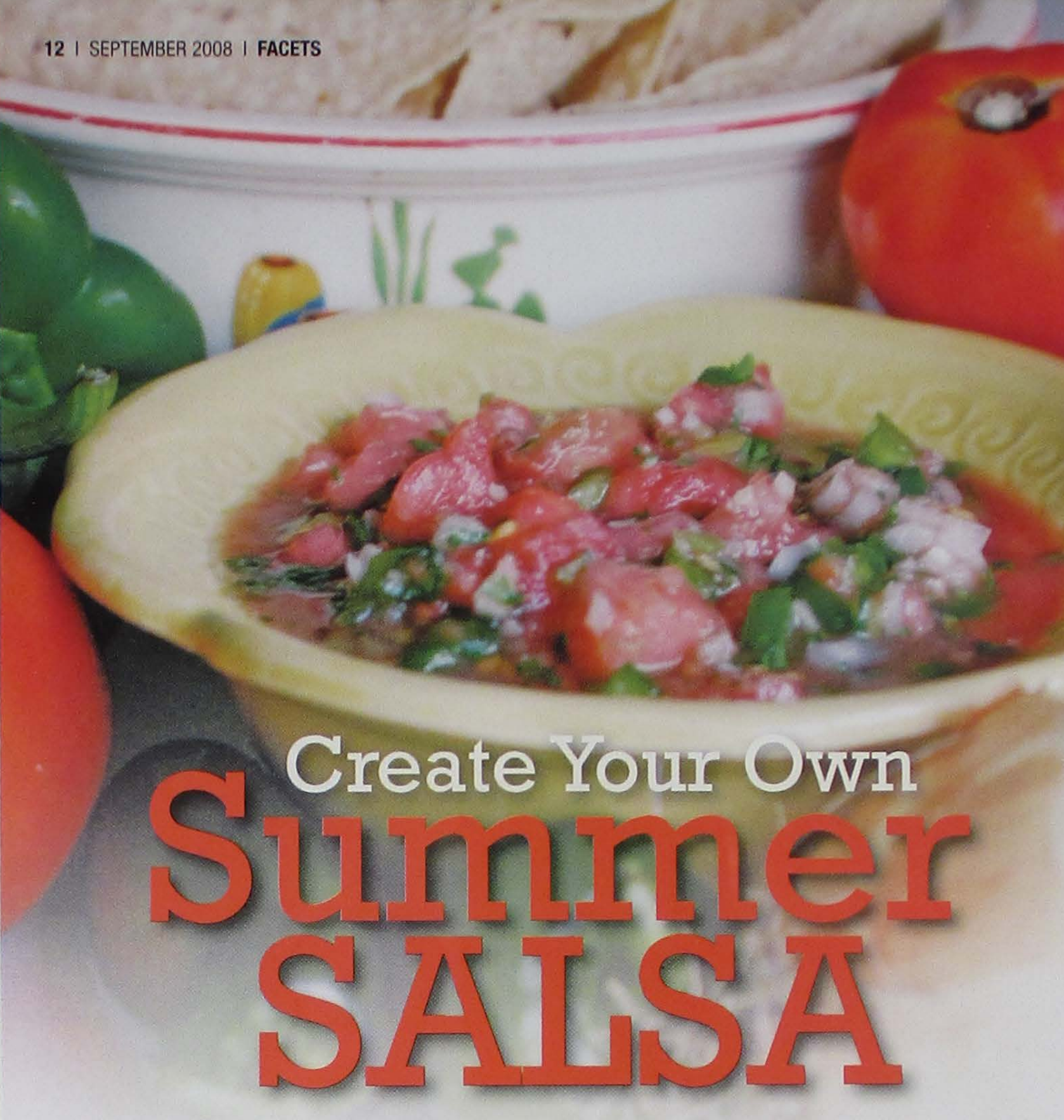
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Ecclesiastes 9:9



Create Your Own Summer SALSA

By JOLENE PHILO

Summertime and the living is easy in central Iowa. In early September, backyard gardens and local farmers' markets overflow with tomatoes, peppers, onions and garlic — the basic ingredients for summer salsa. Recently, I used the vegetables in our weekly Community Supported Agriculture share from Wilbur's Farmers' Market in Boone, and with the help of my husband and daughter, created a tasty late summer salsa.

You can adapt this recipe to suit your family's taste. Adjust the heat by adding different kinds and amounts of peppers. Turn it smooth by running more ingredients through the blender. Or leave it chunky if you enjoy more texture. Try lime juice instead of lemon juice for a slightly different flavor.

With salsa, there's no right or wrong recipe. Just be sure to date your culinary masterpiece, store it in the refrigerator, and discard any unused salsa after a week.

Fresh Summer Salsa

2 cups peeled, chopped tomatoes
¼ cup onion, chopped fine
1 jalapeno pepper, chopped
¼ cup cilantro, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ cup green pepper, chopped
1 banana pepper, chopped
2 tablespoons lemon juice

Mix ingredients together in a bowl. Put 2/3 cup of the vegetable mixture in the blender until it reaches the consistency you like. Put the blended vegetables back into the bowl and stir well. Refrigerate at least two hours before serving to allow the flavors to meld.

Visit these area farmers' markets to find salsa ingredients:

- **Ames Farmers' Market:**
Outdoor market open Thursdays from 2 to 7 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Main Street Depot in downtown Ames. For more information, go to www.amesfarmersmarket.com.
- **North Grand Farmers' Market:**
Open from May to October, Wednesdays from 3 to 6 p.m. and Saturdays 8 a.m. to noon in the J.C. Penney parking lot. For more information, call 515-232-7930.
- **Boone Farmers' Market:**
Thursdays from 2 to 6 p.m. in the Boone Walmart parking lot. For more information, call Scott and Julie Wilbur at 515-432-9038.

Helpful Hints

- To peel tomatoes easily, blanch them in boiling water for 30 seconds. Lift them out of the water with a slotted spoon and immerse them in cold water before peeling. This method also works for peaches.
- To remove the papery skin from garlic, separate the cloves and spread them on a cutting board. Lay the wide blade of a chopping knife (sharp side away from you) on top of the cloves. With your palm, press hard on the wide blade until you feel the cloves give or pop. When you pick up the garlic, it will slide right out of its skin.

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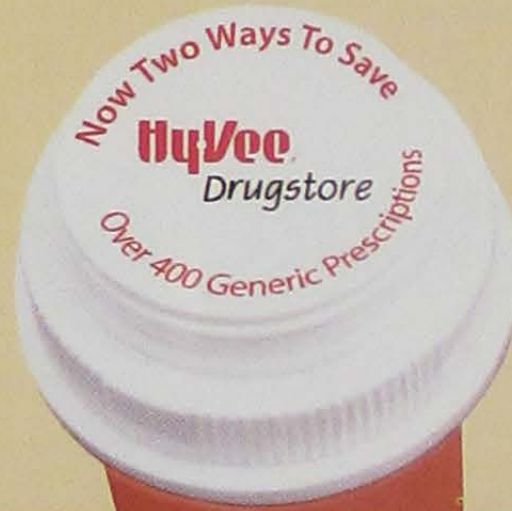


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School JITTERS

Getting your child ready to go back to school can be difficult. As a mother of four and an elementary teacher, August was time to get both my children and my classroom ready for the new school year. I ran into some unique challenges while trying to be a parent and a teacher at the same time.

By ANN GREEN

Meet the teacher

To prepare your elementary child for school, it is recommended you meet your child's teacher. Many schools offer open houses or beginning-of-the-year conferences. For my children, being a teacher's child came with a different set of issues — maybe too much familiarity.

I'd say to my kids "Run down to Julie's classroom and borrow some tape" or "Go ask Paula if she has a book." Low and behold, it wasn't long until my kids were comfortable yelling down the hall for Wendy or Christy or whichever teacher they wanted.

To make matters worse, my co-workers showered my kids with goodies. They knew where every treat jar was stashed and who had the best snacks.

On the first day of school, I sent my children off with a final goodbye and a reminder — call your teacher Mrs. Conlin or Mrs. Malin and don't get into the treats unless your teacher is passing them out.

Tour the school

Most teachers recommend easing first day of school jitters by taking your child on a tour of the building. This was not a problem for my children. They could easily find various classrooms, the office and the bathrooms. Though the teacher's lounge was down in the basement — more affectionately known as the dungeon — my kids would shimmy up and down those dark stairs because the lounge had a candy box and a refrigerator full of pop. Many a time, I worried the teachers would go without their daily dose of caffeine or sugar since my boys had raided the lounge the night before.

I'd send them off to school with a peck on the cheek, a pat on the head and a final plea, "Don't tell my students about the pop and candy in the basement."

Return to a regular schedule

Following a structured classroom schedule can be stressful. In the weeks prior to the first day of school, parents are encouraged to re-establish regular bedtime and morning routines. We did have a little trouble with this recommendation.

We didn't have trouble getting up in the morning. My babies were still rising at the crack of dawn and my head was buzzing with the list of things I needed to finish. I'd load up the diaper bags and the sack lunches and haul everything to the van. By the time everyone was cleaned and dressed and loaded into the van, I was ready for a mid-morning snack. Most trips to school started with a stop for doughnuts.



Once school actually started, it took my kids awhile to understand we don't start every school day with doughnuts.

Now my youngest son is heading to high school. He will still tour the school and meet some of his teachers. But, for guidance in this new environment, he's looking to his sister, a senior who's more than willing to share her hard-earned knowledge of the place.

So it's the beginning of a new school year and I'm reminded a little preparation can smooth the way for most transitions. This year I'll send them out the door, wave goodbye and remind them once again, "Don't get into the treats unless your teacher is passing them out."

Here's a list of books a parent may want to read to their child to help calm any first-

day-of-school jitters.

- "First Day Jitters" by Julie Danneberg
- "First Day Hooray" by Nancy Poydar
- "The Kissing Hand" by Audrey Penn
- "How I Spent My Summer Vacation" by Mark Teague
- "Miss Malarkey Doesn't Live in Room 10" by Judy Finchler
- "Second Grade Rules, Amber Brown (A is for Amber)" by Paula Danziger
- "How to Be Cool in Third Grade" by Betsy Duffrey
- "A Fine, Fine School" by Sharon Creech

At one point I tried to be the dutiful parent by day and the organized teacher by night. Being in a school building in the light

of day is no big deal, but being there alone when the sun goes down is a little eerie. Being in the building, alone at midnight, is down right scary with the clanging furnace and creaking floors and every other unidentifiable knock. My pride marched me into the building—after putting my kids to bed and kissing my husband good night. I swear, my pride will be the death of me yet.

With midnight hours were out and a room still waiting to be organized, I decided to drag my kids to school with me. I loaded up the diaper bag, filled an extra large picnic basket, and bagged up extra toys—in case they needed them. In general, we were packed for a week's vacation. Carrying bags and baskets and babies, we were a regular caravan just getting into the building.

Challenges for English language learners

By ROSE ELSBECKER

What makes learning English so difficult? Is English quite so hard to learn or do we simply keep quiet about the subject? What can you do to affect learning effective English language skills? Does the thought of learning a new language make your head swim? Do you find yourself dizzy from heightened daily expectations, constantly tripping over new vocabulary words, tangling with verbs, sighing over syntax, shaking your head over slang words, grappling with grammar, going crazy over clichés, becoming indignant with idioms, and overall becoming more and more frazzled with the idiosyncrasies of the English language? Are you ready to say forget it and to heck with it all? Are you quite ready to throw in the towel? Are you ready to dive off the deep end?

Wait! Can it really be that bad? With an increasing diverse population in our region, the subject of learning English as a second language has come more and more into the spotlight. For many English language learners seeking a fresh start, new jobs, and new homes, a major part of the rebuilding process comes with learning a new target language. It becomes essential for English language learners to find resources and methods that will help to expedite the process.

According to state departments, linguists, and language professors more learned on the subject than perhaps you or I, there are, (believe it or not), actually several languages out there, for example, Turkish, Finnish or Japanese, that are much more difficult to learn than English is. Though English has its many quirks, there are other languages with which one must contend with learning such things as genres, cases, tonalities, syllabication and writing systems far more complicated than we deal with in learning the English

language. With English we still deal with many puzzlers, such as difficult grammar, words that sound the same but have different meanings, idioms, clichés, slang, the many "exceptions to the rule," odd spellings and the like. The road to learning academically and socially correct English still has its many twists and turns, and though the journey may leave you feeling puzzled or sighing and shaking your head in disbelief at times, there is a way. Though it may seem difficult or tough or even impossible at times to

Find a friend, talk to yourself, talk to your friend, and practice, practice, practice!

conquer the English language, keep in mind that difficult is not the same as impossible. Challenging? Absolutely! Of Course! Impossible? Never!

Ralph Waldo Emerson, the American poet and essayist, described the English language as "the sea which receives tributaries from every region under heaven." In other words, English received its origin from many languages. If you look, you may find words or phrases similar to those of your own native language. This helps to put learning English in a new perspective and to make it more interesting. It helps to shed light on the question many often ask, "Why does English have so many exceptions to the rule?" While endeavoring to sift through a ton of new information, you may make some interesting discoveries of your own along the way.

Let's help to make it simpler. Keep

in mind that learning a new language is like learning any new skill, it takes lots of repetition and lots of practice. As any Olympic competitor will tell you, learning a new skill takes determination, dedication, time, energy, commitment, and practice. Not only does it take practice, it takes lots of practice—daily practice. The key to learning anything new is repetition. Whether you are setting out to learn a new language or to become an Olympic athlete, it's important to set tangible, or realistic goals, then to break those goals down into smaller goals. It's important as with anything, to start out small and to build upon what you've learned.

It's very important to find a method that works for you as an individual and to set aside time for practice in your target language. The emphasis is on daily practice, not just now and then. It's important to get into a routine and to keep your goals in sight. Just like an athlete, you may tap into the power of visioning, closing your eyes and picturing yourself as a winner.

Just like an athlete running a race, if you fall down, you get up, brush yourself off and keep going. When you were learning to walk, you weren't perfect right at the start, you fell down several times, then, although you may have laughed or cried, you always got up and tried again—going for a prize that was important to you. Which is more important, that you fell down, or that you got up and go going again? The same goes with learning a new language. With a little perseverance, and a lot of patience, you'll soon find yourself overcoming hurdles along the way that in the beginning you may have thought not possible and reaching your goals.

When you're new at something, consider yourself in training. When you're in training, it's important to do stretching and warm-

ups before beginning the actual race. It works the same with languages. When learning new language skills, you start out small and build upon what you've learned. You may want to use a picture dictionary, as visual aids can be a powerful learning tool. One of the most important things that you can do is to find a trusted friend or a practice partner with whom you can practice speaking and with whom you feel free to ask questions. If you are a prospective college student, you may wish to check out the Intensive English and Cultural centers at one of the state colleges. If you are new in a community, you may wish to check out options such as programs available through your local workforce development center, your local community college, library or programs available through churches in the area. Another thing that you can do is to join a class or a study group, or find a pen pal. You may form a lunch and learn group at work, or teach words or phrases that you have learned to a co-worker or to another student or child. Teaching someone else is a great way to practice and to solidify what you have learned. Talk to yourself around the house, around the yard, while you're driving or walking along, or anytime, anyplace, taking note of things new or old around you everyday. You also might like to keep a

language journal and note in your journal new things that you have learned that day about the language or culture, methods that worked best for you, frustrations or problems and resources in the community for English language learners. Find a friend, a practice partner, a mentor, or a guide, to work together with.

Look around, and find someone that you trust, someone with whom you feel you can be yourself and with whom you're not afraid to make mistakes or to laugh at yourself. It's okay to laugh, as we all make mistakes. Learning a new language is a process that takes a lifetime and a lifetime of commitment. The English language is always evolving, as from the beginning, taking on or borrowing new words from other languages, always adding words or phrases or terms that are fresh and new and always challenging. With that, bear in mind that the process of English language learning is a continuous process for all of us, and with that, we are all in the same boat together. So go ahead, chatter away in your target language. It's the only way to learn.

Again, just as a reminder, please allow yourself time for growth, and don't be afraid to make mistakes. Some of the greatest inventions of our time were born

of mistakes. Wasn't the Hershey's chocolate bar one of them? The whole world loves chocolate! Don't be afraid to laugh at yourself either, as laughter is universal and humility is a sign of greatness. You don't have to be an Olympic champion to go for the gold. The first time you apply for a job in your target language, make a new friend, or read a book with your child, you'll feel like a million bucks. If you find a new friend in a new place with whom you can share your joys and triumphs, laughter and tears and connect by way of a common language, how do you put a price tag on that one? That's impossible! It's priceless!

Why learn a new language? There are many reasons, both practical and pragmatic, in a world of high tech, international business and ever increasingly mobile society. There's one other simpler reason. It's fun! It's fun to challenge yourself, to learn new things, and to see the world around you with new eyes. So, what are you waiting for? Go for it! There's a whole new world to explore out there! There's no time like the present.

Note: Key to Success as noted by business leaders, instructors and English Language Learners themselves -- find a friend, talk to yourself, talk to your friend, and practice, practice, practice!

Learning to dance

continued from page 5

Mike had another relative come to visit and as she sat at Mike's bedside she held his hand. He tried to release it but she wouldn't let go and told him so. She held his hand the whole time that she was there. He was grateful that she wouldn't let go.

Friends and family sent gifts, brought baskets and bags full of goodies, flowers and more. We even received a card from a church we had never heard of but had been placed on their prayer list. We would learn later that it was my Dad's church.

My Dad ... as he was leaving with my Stepmom, after visiting Mike in the hospital he stopped at Mike's bedside and asked if he could pray with Mike. Now, for those of you who know me well, and for those of you who don't, my Dad and I have had a pretty rough road to get to where we are today. But there they were, the two men that have had the greatest influence in my life, grasping hands, heads bowed and eyes clinched tight, as my Dad prayed for my husband. I was trying to concentrate on what my Dad was saying but I was too busy thanking God for this moment.

Prayers. I asked everyone that I could think of to pray for Mike and our family. I sent out e-mails and mailed prayer requests. Family and friends put us on their prayer lists and in their prayers.

Our pastor, Brad, visited Mike in the hospital and prayed with us. My friend,

Beverly, called me one morning and asked if she could pray with me. She prayed over the phone as tears burned down my cheeks. The Bible says, "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them." Matthew 18:19 and 20.

When we got home, the kindness and generosity didn't end. We received meals, desserts, and baked goods for almost three weeks after Mike got home. Several of Ethan's teachers got together to show us their support. Our youngest son, Connor, is ten years old. His kindergarten teacher heard our news and emailed us to share her story of cancer and hope with us. One of Ethan's teachers saw he was struggling and gave him a card to cheer him up and let him know she was thinking of him. All of the boys' teachers stayed in contact with us to let us know how they were doing. We received emails of encouragement, support, thoughtfulness and prayers from so many. And an unending offer of help. Kathy, my mother in law, I know without a doubt that God has something extraordinary planned for this wonderful woman. For all she has been through she never ceased to help. She watched daycare kids while I went to appointments with Mike, she ran errands for us, she made us meals,

she took the boys while we were at the hospital, and she prayed.

I could continue to lament on the overwhelming kindness, generosity and selflessness that was shown to our family but mere words wouldn't do it justice. I will never be able to articulate our tremendous gratitude to everyone throughout this. It is not something you go through and remain unchanged. Although we may stumble ... be out of rhythm ... and occasionally even step on one another's feet when the storms come ... we will choose to learn to dance.

Mike is back to work and cancer free. I think Connor summed it all up with three words during lunch at one of our favorite restaurants. We had just come from church and it was a day where people were allowed to stand up and give their testimonies. Of course without a "test" there would be no testimony. We were eating our meal and talking about the service. Connor said that he was thinking about getting up there and giving his testimony. I asked him, "What would you have told them that God has done in your life?" And in typical Connor fashion, short and to the point, he said, "He saved Daddy." Once again, I couldn't breathe and tears fell onto my chicken salad sandwich. Although not physically, I was on my knees, head bowed, hands clasped, thanking God. He had indeed, "Saved Daddy."

Between the PAGES

By JANE M. ZANTOW

Sweetness fills the air like a sudden lift toward something from long ago and yet anticipated. Apples ripening? I look toward where the scent comes from and sure enough, just to the left is an old, large, fruit laden tree. Apples. End of summer. August skies perfume.

I finish my evening walk. The apples remind me that once again the school bells will be ringing, keeping children and teachers in line with the rhythm of routine schedules and homework, classes to teach and behaviors to discipline. And something else ... library! Talk about sweetness!



In an elementary school the library is a place to enjoy agreeable things. Or at least to wonder about them. There is a safe distance between the non-fiction photos of spiders, squids or dinosaurs and the quiet hand that turns the page amazed by them. Between those pages fertile imaginations wrestle concepts older than the hills with just a glimpse.

"Wow. Look at this!"

Wonder, wonder, wonder. Sigh of relief. Just a library book. Everything OK.

Books with titles like "Bill's Belly Button," "Lizzy Skunk," "Owl Moon," "Princess Aasta," "Stella- Fairy of the Forest," "Knuffle Bunny" or "Widget" Who can resist the alliterations or dreamy charm?

Sweetness gets even better when it's shared, and my job is sharing those marvelous wonders! The shelves of picture books with their colorful illustrations captivate wide-eyed seven-year-olds, creating a longing to read.

What pleasure! What joy! What sweetness! "What does this say?"

This solitary question is asked many times during the course of the school year. In my six years working as media associate at a local elementary school, I've noticed there is no shyness or shame involved with their question - just matter of fact inquiry. They really want to know. So I read the title out loud, slowly running my finger under each word, and then repeat it with the enthusiasm

that the author intended.

But given the fact that I need to check-out the other four students and send them on their way back to class, I only have time to encourage them to try it themselves, or to show their library books to mom and dad hoping that they will take an interest in their child's choices from the school library.

A student's face lights up, wide eyed with expectation - it is the first day of checkouts. They realize they are allowed to take home books. ("Take home books? They're trusting me with this?" I can almost hear their thoughts.) Checkout time is a sweet gift. And story time a sweet delight.

"That's a happy book. I'm gonna look for that one!"

A media associate couldn't ask for a better response. Library story time sets them off. Being read to is a ticket to finding out who this "library lady" is. They laugh with me and tell me how they relate to the story. Or they look so sad when they remember how they felt the same way.

Plus! Best of all, they genuinely want to be the person turning the pages and understanding each word! When I read "Widget" by Lyn Rossiter McFarland, a picture book about a small, stray dog who wanders into the yard of a kind woman with a house full of cats, we take turns telling stories about our own dogs and cats at home. In the story the stray is accepted into the household by copying the cats behaviors with meows, tree climbing and even using the kitty litter box. But when the lady of the house is hurt, his barking demonstrates the benefits of being a dog, because he gets the neighbors attention and she is rescued. From then on Widget is accepted for who he really is.

Typical of picture books the exaggeration is a key element in communication. Typical of seven-year-olds, exaggeration is just plain key.

One boy said he had "... a million cats. Probably 2,000. And their names are all Frank, Sam, Kyle and John."

Apples on a tree.

Ripening.

Reminding me.

Growing in those children ...

Life so amazing.

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Girlfriend's guide to

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The Language of Money

By KAREN PETERSEN

In a recent survey, 91.2 percent of investors surveyed — females and males — said they had trouble understanding their financial planners and advisors. Difficulty in understanding financial jargon is not a gender issue. You may think men have a better grasp on financial terms, but remember the stereotypical, "Men do not ask directions." Women generally are more willing to ask questions, to own the fact that they do not understand.

Make a commitment to learn the language of money and the vocabulary of financial professionals. All through life you will encounter situations where you receive financial advice; when you meet with an advisor, attend a seminar, make investment decisions in your retirement plan, and when you plan for your financial future. The burden of understanding financial advice is on the investor.

Financial Jargon

Now consider this ... there may be contributing factors to the communication gap. If you are aware of these factors it may be easier to develop a method to communicate with your financial advisors.

1. A large percentage of financial advisors use industry jargon when they communicate with investors. They use words financial professionals understand, not words that investors understand. Here is an example of financial jargon and the non-jargon equivalent:
 - "You have a high beta portfolio."
 - "You have a volatile portfolio."
2. Some advisors use specialized terms to sound like experts. They may think if they "sound" like an expert they must be an expert. True experts in the financial industry want to be understood.
3. And unfortunately industry terms are often used when clients are unhappy with the results of advice from the advisor. You may be unhappy with the return of a money market (this is a liquid account that earns interest). An industry jargon response might be, "You are earning 200 basis points, how much more do you expect?" It would be hard to know if this is a good return unless you know one basis point is .01%, or one one-hundredth of a percent. Two hundred basis points equal 2%.

Peggy Baer, the recently retired director for the Office of Rail Transportation for the Iowa DOT, agreed to share some thoughts with me about financial decisions on that need to be made on your way to retirement.

Peggy's father was a successful investor. He thoroughly enjoyed making, investing and talking about money. This money interest and knowledge passed right over Peggy. Her method was hard work, a career she loved and automatic savings. "Fortunately my dad's financial knowledge and interest was not lost to the family; my son is just like my dad."

Learn about money and investing

Advice from Peggy for getting involved with the vocabulary of investing comes from a 1991 job experience at the DOT.

"I became Staff Coordinator for the Iowa Railway Finance Authority, which is staffed by DOT employees. Immediately I enrolled in Accounting, Finance, and Commercial Loan Management classes at ISU. I needed to learn the vocabulary of auditing and accounting; if you have a need to know, there is a way."

This really is the attitude we must have if we want to succeed in managing our money. I am often asked, "But why should I have to know about investments?" My answer is, "Who cares the most about your financial stability?" If it is you, quit asking why, follow Peggy's method and be on your way to financial confidence.

Physical and financial check-ups

Peggy thinks we may all benefit from a financial check up at age 50.

"It is common knowledge that we should have a colonoscopy at age 50. The procedure is not all the enjoyable, but it is better than having colon cancer later in life. Financial planning at age 50 may not be that enjoyable either. You might discover that you need to make changes in your spending, save more or change your investment philosophy, but it is better than not having an adequate income in later life."

Fees or commissions

And one last thought from Peggy if you are looking for advice.

"Understand the difference between a fee-based advisor and one who earns a commission. Both may have value in your financial decisions; just know how your advisor is being compensated."

Financial education summary

- Learn the vocabulary of money and investing.
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Karen L Petersen CFP® CDFA™ is a fee-based financial planner.

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Cole School is in rural Boone and is in the process of being restored.

Boone Community School students have raised money together with various grants and donations to restore Cole School two miles northeast of Boone. Donations have been received from DeShon Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution, Iowa Dept. of Ed, State Historical Society, Barilla America, and Thrivent. For more information, call Barb MacDougall at (515) 432-8690.

Country School

By SUE ULLESTAD

I couldn't wait for school to start! I'd watched my big brother go off to school for three years and now it was time for me. I was big enough now to race up the cement steps of the two-room schoolhouse, just a mile and a half from our farm. The door creaked and banged behind us as it had so many times before as I longingly watched Steve slip into class as mom and I dropped him off.

I hung my sweater and my red satchel that smelled like new on a low hook in the hallway. The ceilings were so high (12-foot I found out later) making me feel so small. Timidly I crossed the "big room" where fifth-through eighth-graders were gathering and walked into the "little room" which was for kindergarten through fourth grade. I saw some of my Sunday school friends finding seats in the farthest two rows which were reserved for the new class of kindergartners, the biggest class to begin St. Paul's Lutheran School in years. We had six in our class. My teacher, Mrs. Ohlmann, was a thin, frail elderly lady with stooped shoulders. Her smile was frequent and her mannerism was calm and slow.

I felt warm inside looking at the pictures of Jesus hanging all around the room. One was with Him holding a lamb with other lambs following, and another with the children flocking around Him.

We each had our own desks. The tops were pretty heavy and squeaked loudly as I checked what was in mine ... not much yet, but I carefully placed my shiny, plastic pencil case full of supplies and my paste inside. Karen, my second cousin, sat in front of me. Cindy sat behind me. Her parents and my parents often got together on Saturday evenings. Kathy, another second cousin, sat across from me. The rest of the class was boys; one of them was a relative too.

Just to my left was a shelf of toys and puzzles. I was eager to get my coloring ABC worksheet done so that I could string tiny beads onto a black string. Mrs. Ohlmann gave my class a lesson and an assignment to do as she worked with the first-graders in the next row. She gave them written work and then switched her attention to the second-graders in the next row and so on. Some students would go up to the front of the room to write

equations on the blackboard. My brother sat in the last row as he was in fourth grade. He had the privilege of walking his desk, which was no easy feat, into the "big room" for religion class in the afternoon. Everyone couldn't wait to be in fourth grade!

Behind us was the sunroom. I loved the sunroom! It was a narrow, long room that had a long sand table, a drinking fountain, cubbies for our lunch boxes and the door through

which we ran out to recess. During free time I played with the little wooden trees and houses in the soft, cool sand. We even had snacks and milk on little fold up chairs there in the sunroom.

Recess was the highlight of my day. The girls and I would hang upside down on the jungle gym and I could do tricks on the horizontal bar like the big kids. I was proud of that! We wore dresses with shorts underneath so as to not



Mackey School is in Harrison Township in Boone County.

be embarrassed playing so actively. Sometimes the whole school would form teams and play softball in the church yard. My brother could hit the ball far; I usually struck out, but was allowed to run the bases anyway. We played "house" at the base of the old oak trees behind the school. Beyond that and over the fence was the sledding hill we would use in the winter. The farmer who lived there was another relative!

One particular day, Karen and I decided to leave Cindy out. It was recess time and we hid from her. We ignored her when she was near us. Kathy wanted no part of it. I felt bad for Cindy, knowing that I wouldn't want to be left out. I knew it was cruel. We'd been taught to be kind to everyone. The snubbing didn't last long, I was glad of that.

Noon lunch was greatly anticipated. We ran down the

steps to the basement with our tin lunch boxes. We formed a line at the long pull-up window to the kitchen to pick up our milk cartons. I always picked chocolate; it went so well with the white bread sandwiches mom had made. We talked and laughed and got to squish our milk cartons on the cement outside.

I enjoyed religion assignments and readings from the Bible history book. We memorized the Ten Commandments, the creed, the Lord's Prayer and the rest of the chief parts of Luther's Small Catechism. I especially liked music and singing. I remember that we practiced the first two verses of "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" lined up in the back of the room many times. Then the day finally arrived for us to pile into cars and go out by the Ledges to the gospel radio station recording house. We

squeezed into the little white building with the tall radio transmitter to sing our song. I was so proud to be a part of it. I sang out with every ounce of me.

Kindergarten went by so quickly. First grade brought a little harder work. I was young for my class and I was the last to turn in the math assignments, but my new teacher, Mrs. Haage, was calm and helpful. Steve was in the "big room" now all day as he was in fourth grade. I missed seeing him over on the other side of the room, but I knew I would see him at noon and at home. Both Steve and I learned so much academically and socially at St. Paul's. Our faith and spiritual training was solid.

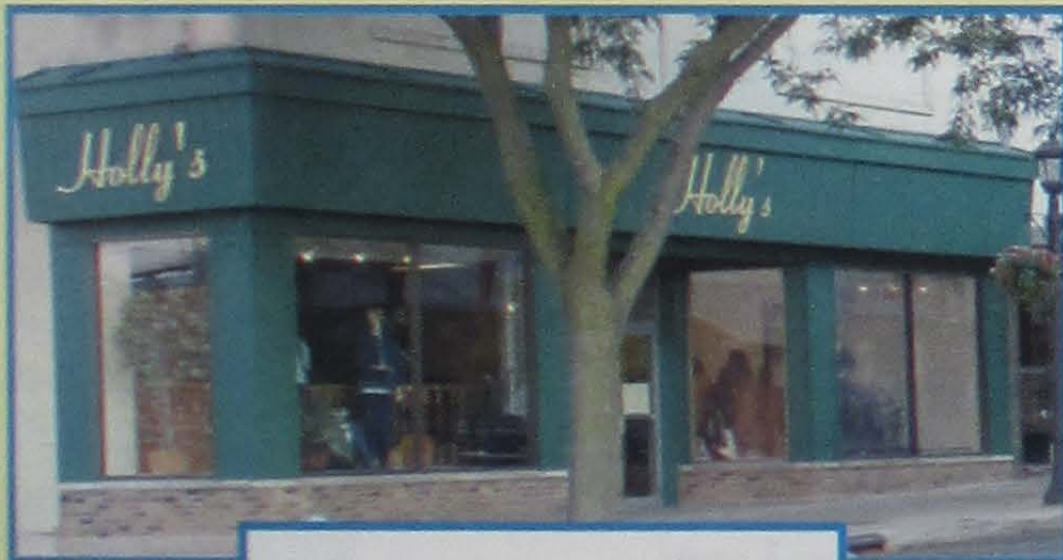
That proved to be our last year at the country school. Dad feared that we might be behind when it came time to switch to public school after

eighth grade. It was a hard decision for our parents, and it was a shocking change for Steve and me. Comfortable where we were, we didn't want to go into the unknown going to a "town school." It was not an easy transition. We did fine academically in the public school, as did my five classmates from St. Paul when they went on to public high school, but it was harder socially. I missed being able to pray with my friends and teacher. I missed the name of Jesus. I missed the pictures on the wall. I never told dad and mom as I found out later how torn they were in making the switch. I am just thankful for the experiences I had during those two years. There are not too many 53-year-olds that can say they went to a country school, a parochial one at that!

The school closed its doors in spring of 1965. An era gone, but memories remain.

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hue & cry

Definition: Any loud clamor or protest intended to incite others to action.

By MARY HALSTRUM
Facets Editor

By the time this issue of Facets hits the stands, there will only be 2 ½ weeks of summer left. Does it feel like the summers keep getting shorter and shorter every year, or is it just me? Summer has always been my favorite season, and after living in Southern California for more than nine years, I definitely have become a little soft where Iowa's extreme winter weather is concerned. This summer's warm temperatures were especially welcome after the record-breaking winter, and when the humidity came around, like it always does, I didn't complain once. That's the promise I made to myself during last winter's many sub-zero days. And I repeated that promise when I nearly had to pry my fingers off the steering wheel every time I drove to work on snow- and ice-covered roads. So after much research — OK, not really — I've come to the conclusion that winter is best observed from inside a warm, cozy, safe house, while summer is best experienced outside at the beach, riding a bike along a bike trail, going to Adventureland, visiting Living History Farms or walking along the Midway at the Iowa State Fair. I know there are probably plenty of folks out there who actually prefer winter to summer, but I don't seem to meet many of them. Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that outside winter activities aren't fun, they're just not my cup of tea.

Since it can't be summer all year long, fall is the next best thing. The leaves turn

bright, vibrant colors, football starts and the sweaters come out of storage. Speaking of clothes, my wallet has been opening a lot more this past month as the cost of getting my 6-year-old daughter ready to go back to school is really adding up. School clothes, school shoes, school supplies and hair ties. Luckily she attends a school where uniforms are required, so I get a little bit of a break on the clothes budget. The state-sponsored sales tax free days of Aug. 1 and Aug. 2 also helped me save a little money. I remember how exciting shopping for school clothes was for my mother and me when I was a child. Grant it, since my daughter wears a uniform, it's not quite as exciting for her, but she still enjoys trying on the new clothes my mother and I have picked out for her. She also expresses her creativity in her wardrobe by having fun socks, tights and belts. Katharine got her ears pierced over the summer, so she's been anxious to see all of her friends to show them off. I had reservations about having her ears pierced, but she seemed really resigned to doing it, and she barely flinched when the saleswomen at Claire's Boutique, each armed with a needle gun, marked her ears and pulled the trigger. We even picked out a pair of earrings she can wear after she takes her starter ones out.

Soon it will be time for the bake sales, the fundraisers, etc. During the school year, it seems like nearly every day a note detailing some event is sent home in my daughter's backpack. Schools encourage

and welcome parent participation in almost everything. I really enjoy joining my daughter for lunch at least two days each month. It's a way to connect with her during the school day, and to observe her in the environment where she spends seven hours a day, five days a week. When she was in kindergarten, she asked me a least once a week if I could volunteer for centers, but I had to explain that wasn't possible since I work full-time more than 30 miles away. That's the rub about being a mother who works outside the home. I think Katharine understands, but she doesn't necessarily like it. Sometimes I don't like it either.

I'm happy school is back in session, and I think she is too. She might not say it, but I think she really likes school, which is a good sign. I know she's only in the first grade, but she has a real thirst for knowledge, which hopefully will continue throughout her lifetime. And I can be happy that I don't have to buy twice as much of everything until two years down the road when my younger daughter starts full-time preschool. They say it takes a village to raise a child, well, it also takes a good-sized bank account as providing for those little buggers isn't cheap.

So as we get ready to say so long to summer and hello to fall, the hectic pace of school and the activities that go along with it welcomes us back. And even though summer is, for all intents and purposes, over, we aren't as sad as we thought we'd be.

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september calendar

Aug. 15 through Oct. 19

The Octagon Center for the Arts will showcase 60 vibrant paintings by 53 Iowa Watercolor Society members from Aug. 15 through Oct. 19. This year's juror is Stephen Quiller, an internationally known painter and workshop instructor famous for his studio and on-location paintings of Colorado landscapes. His paintings have graced covers and his work has been featured in articles of many leading art magazines. Quiller will be giving a free gallery talk and book signing on Tuesday, Sept. 16, at 7 p.m. in the Octagon Galleries. The Octagon is located at 427 Douglas Ave. in downtown Ames. Hours are Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday through Sunday, 1 to 5 p.m.

Weekends, Aug. 30 to Sept. 14

"Des Moines Renaissance Faire" 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Festival Park/Sleepy Hollow Sports Park Iowa's new theme park setting, dubbed Canterbury-on-Sherwood, comes to life with a full-scale castle and a complete shopping village. Hundreds of professional performers fill its stages and lanes. Food and drink will be available. For more information, call (641) 357-5177 or e-mail Greg at greg@festint.com.

Tuesday, Sept. 2

ISU Carillon Concert Series 2008 at the Campanile, ISU Central Campus. Guest carillonneur is Trevor Workman, Bournville Schools, Birmingham, England. The concert begins at 7 p.m. and is free. Campanile tours are available after each concert. Bring your lawn chairs and enjoy an evening on Central Campus with your friends and family. For more information, call Tin-Shi Tam at (515) 294-2911.

Friday, Sept. 5

The United Way of Story County Campaign Kickoff will be at the St. Cecelia Catholic Church from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. The kickoff combines both ISU and county kick-offs into one event. For more information, call (515) 268-5142.

Saturday, Sept. 6

The Butterfly Freedom House will have its Annual Fund Raising Garage Sale from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Grand Avenue Baptist Church, 24th Street and Grand Avenue. The Butterfly Freedom House is a nonprofit faith-based ministry that is reaching out to women that have been incarcerated. For more information, call (515) 232-8242.

Thursday, Sept. 11

In 2008 we are celebrating literature in the garden with the theme year entitled, "A Novel Garden." Join us as we create a unique floral arrangement to take home with local florists and floral designers inspired by classic and contemporary books and stories. Arrangement of the Month, 7 p.m., "Peter Pan" by J. M. Barrie -- Presented by Dan Brabec, Coe's Floral & Gifts, Ames. Cost is \$25 CoHorts' members, \$30 general public. Pre-registration and payment is required. For more information, call (515) 294-2710.

Wednesday, Sept. 24

"Sweeney Todd" will be presented at Stephen's Auditorium at 7:30 p.m. "Sweeney Todd" is a production of a Broadway tour de force that boasts melodies, humor and thrills. For more information, call Patti Cotter at (515) 294-1238.

Thursday, Sept. 25

Young concert artist Jose Franch-Ballester will perform at 7:30 p.m. at the Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall on the ISU campus. For more information, call Patti Cotter at (515) 294-1238.

"Can Capitalism Save the Planet" will be presented by Ted Steinberg at 8 p.m. at the Ames City Auditorium. Admission is free. For more information, call (515) 239-5365.

Saturday, Sept. 27

Fall for Ames presents Susan Werner at 7:30 p.m. at the Ames City Auditorium. Admission starts at \$8. For more information, call (515) 239-5365.

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meet a faceted woman

Name: Janice F. Coble

Age: 52

Position: Co-owner, Temptations on Main

Family: Husband Tim



Janice and her husband Tim.



Janice and Tim at their chocolate store, Temptations on Main.

What would you do with \$1,000 to spend on yourself? A few days in Kansas City to shop and eat at our favorite spots.

Your favorite meal: Pork roast at my parents' home.

Craziest fashion you ever wore: I'm not sure, but it had to be a cardinal and gold ensemble at a Big 8 Tournament.

Your favorite motto: There's nothing better than a good friend, except a good friend with chocolate.

What makes you happy? My husband, my family and my friends.

What makes you laugh? Kids in the candy store — of ANY age!

What have you accomplished that has made you proud? Making the big jump of leaving a corporate job as a CPA to purchase Temptations on Main with Tim.

My idea of a nightmare job: One without all

of the chocolate and ice cream I care to eat.

My simplest pleasure: A leisurely walk on a beautiful day.

I crave: Veggies ... when I've eaten TOO much junk food.

I secretly love: Rachael Ray

When I am an old lady: I want to ride the retiree bus to all of the games at Hilton Coliseum.

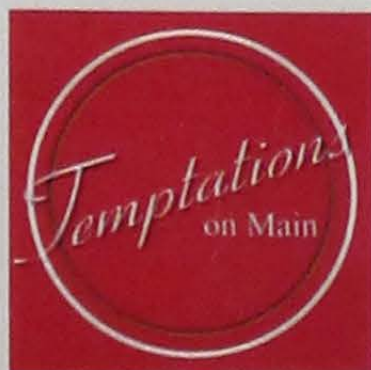
I am thankful for: More things than I could ever begin to list.

Favorite wardrobe staple: A sweater because our shop is always chilly.

How do you give back to your community? We enjoy supporting many good causes through donations of our candies. I'm active in helping improve and liven up the Main Street Cultural District.



Janice at an Ames Chamber event hosted by the Main Street Cultural District. Temptations on Main provided ISU chocolates for the event.

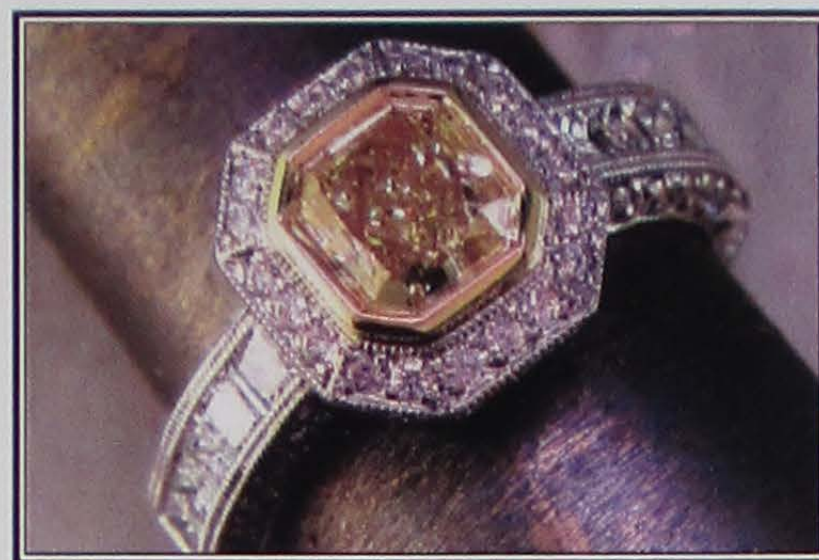


What is your favorite kind of chocolate?

Janice Coble: Dark Chocolate with nuts... it's sweet, savory, crunchy, creamy and healthy all at once.



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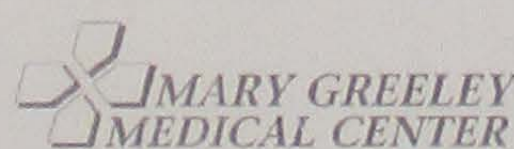
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OCTOBER

is breast cancer awareness month



The William R. Bliss Cancer Center is partnering with Ville Day Spa to offer women a special evening. Women who schedule their mammogram during the month of October are eligible to enjoy an evening at the Ville Day Spa in Ames.

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